



Australian Government
Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice

India

India – IND39884 – Khamma – Kamma –
Reddy – Caste –TDP
22 February 2012

- 1. Please provide a brief description of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), including its political aims. . Please provide an update since IND31339 on whether members of the TDP have recently been attacked in India, and in Andhra Pradesh in particular, and, if so, whether they have been attacked by members of the Congress Party or of the Reddy caste or ethnicity.**

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) is based in Andhra Pradesh. Telegu Desam means Telugu Nation. It is currently in opposition to the Indian National Congress in the state government of Andhra Pradesh.

Telugu Desam (Telugu Nation) was reported to have disbanded in March 1992, but a revitalized party, led by former film star Nandmuri Tarak (N. T.) Rama RAO, swept into power in the 1994 state election. Subsequent intraparty divisions ultimately saw the reform-minded Chandrababu Naidu replace Rao as chief minister in September 1995. The leadership of the Rao faction passed, after Rao's death in January 1996, to his widow, Lakshmi Parvathi.¹

In the 1996 general election to the Lok Sabha (lower house) the TDP-Naidu (or TDP-Babu) won 16 lower house seats as a member of the United Front. In 1998 the Parvathi faction, having organized separately as the NTR Telugu Desam Party, won no seats, while the Naidu faction slipped from 16 seats to 12. In March 1999 the TDP leadership voted to leave the United Front, in part because the alliance's central committee had decided to support a Congress Party candidate for speaker of the Lok Sabha.²

Under Naidu the TDP achieved major gains in 1999 for the general election to the Lokh Sabha, winning 29 Lok Sabha seats and extending its support to the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government – a coalition of 24 parties under the leadership of the fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party, without, however, joining the Council of Ministers. In the 2004 general election to the Lok Sabha, as part of the NDA, the TDP saw its Lok Sabha representation plummet to 5 seats as the Congress Party successfully exploited a widening gap between the rising fortunes of the state's urban elite and the plight of its rural farmers. In the simultaneous state election the TDP lost all but 45 of its 180 assembly seats.³

¹ Banks, Arthur S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'India', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C. http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_India - Accessed 15 April 2011

² Banks, Arthur S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'India', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C. http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_India - Accessed 15 April 2011

³ Banks, Arthur S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'India', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C. http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_India - Accessed 15 April 2011

In 2009 the TDP won 6 seats in the Lok Sabha and made a significant recovery in the state assembly election, claiming 105 seats but failing to topple the Indian National Congress. Its leader is N. Chandrababu Naidu (former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and President of the Party).⁴

The TDP seeks to increase its total membership to 57.73 lakh [Note of the Country Adviser: one lakh is one hundred thousand] across the state of Andhra Pradesh by increasing the general membership to 34.73 lakh from 31 lakh in 2010 and active membership to 23 lakh from the existing 18 lakh.⁵

The TDP opposes the bifurcation of the state of Andhra Pradesh, and TDP MPs have protested against such a move whereas Congress members support a separate state.⁶

There is no information which indicates that TDP members have recently been attacked in India, or in Andhra Pradesh in particular, either by members of the Congress Party or of the Reddy caste or ethnicity.

There are some recent reports which indicate that members of the TDP have been involved in political clashes in Andhra Pradesh.

On 10 January 2012, pro-statehood agitators for the Telangana state tried to stall TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu's visit to Telangana region.⁷

On 26 November 2011, the State Tourism minister Vatti Vasant Kumar (Indian National Congress) and TDP legislator Chintamaneni Prabhakar shoved each other, following an argument. Mr Prabhakar was later taken in custody.⁸

A *Hindustan Times* report states that in September 2011, pro-statehood agitators (for the Telangana state) attacked legislators and activists who belonged to the TDP as the TDP opposes the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. The TDP activists retaliated and it is claimed there were clashes in various places.⁹

2. Please provide a brief description of the Khamma and Reddy castes or ethnicities. Please provide any recent evidence of members of the Khamma caste being harmed or attacked by members of the Reddy caste or members of the Congress Party in India and in Andhra Pradesh in particular.

⁴ Banks, Arthur S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'India', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C. http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_India - Accessed 15 April 2011

⁵ 'TDP to launch membership drive' 2012, *The Times of India* website, 12 January <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/TDP-to-launch-membership-drive/articleshow/11455303.cms?prtpage=1> - Accessed 13 February 2012

⁶ 'Telangana row stalls LS again' 2009, *Deccan Herald Service*, 18 December

⁷ 'Stones pelted at Jaganmohan Reddy's convoy' 2012, *India Today* website, 10 January, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/jaganmohan-reddy-telangana-fast/1/168125.html> - Accessed 15 February 2012

⁸ 'Andhra minister, TDP MLA fight in public' 2011, *Rediff News*, 26 November <http://www.rediff.com/news/report/andhra-minister-tdp-mla-fight-in-public/20111126.htm> - Accessed 16 February 2012.

⁹ 'Pro-Telangana stir turns violent, rail roko begins' 2011, *Hindustan Times*, 23 September <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/Hyderabad/Pro-Telangana-stir-turns-violent-rail-roko-begins/Article1-749442.aspx> - Accessed 14 February 2012

The Khamma or Kamma is a dominant peasant caste in coastal Andhra Pradesh.¹⁰ The Kamma population in Andhra Pradesh is nearly 4.8% of the total population, approximately 40 lakhs [Note of the Country Adviser: four million].¹¹

According to a Telegu website the Kamma is the most influential community in Andhra Pradesh – it is also known as the Chowdary community:

In a numerical ranking (by population size) they would probably be fifth or sixth but they are concentrated in some areas like Krishna, Guntur, Southern parts of the Godavari river delta, Nizamabad in Telangana and some places of Rayalseema like Anantapur. [Note of the Country Adviser: the total population of Andhra Pradesh is approximately 84 million].¹²

The same website states that the Chowdary community were involved in tax collection; in coastal Andhra Pradesh, Kammas are also involved in farming and sugar, chemical, and cement factories. It states that ‘the top leadership and backers of the Telegu Desam party are Kamma.’¹³

The Reddy is described as a dominant peasant caste.¹⁴ Members of this caste are found mainly in the state of Andhra Pradesh where they constitute about 11-15 per cent of the population.¹⁵

An analysis in the Mumbai-based news and scholarly publication *Economic and Political Weekly* states that Andhra Pradesh is a divided state and the movement for a separate state of Telangana is gaining momentum. Party politics in Andhra Pradesh is dominated by two castes, the Reddy and Kamma castes. The analysis states that the Reddy caste ‘largely operates through the Congress Party and the Kamma caste operates through the Telegu Desham [sic] Party (TDP). It states that the Reddy caste has its social roots in all three sub-regions of Andhra Pradesh, that is in coastal Andhra, Telangana and Rayalaseema whereas the Kamma caste has its social base largely in coastal Andhra and to some extent in Rayalaseema. The report states while the Reddys of Rayalaseema and coastal Andhra have largely participated in politics through the Congress Party, they can be opportunistic in terms of political loyalties. The Kamma from coastal Andhra have largely been led by the TDP.’¹⁶

There is no recent evidence of members of the Khamma caste being harmed or attacked by members of the Reddy caste or members of the Congress Party in India and in Andhra Pradesh in particular.

¹⁰ Srinivasulu, K. 2002, ‘Caste, Class and Social Articulation in Andhra Pradesh: Mapping Differential Regional Trajectories’, Working Paper 179, Overseas Development Institute (London) website, September, <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/2692.pdf> – Accessed 13 February 2012

¹¹ ‘Welcome to Kammasociety’ (undated), Kamma Society website <http://kamasociety.com/node/1> - Accessed 20 February 2012

¹² ‘Kamma’ (undated), Wowtelegu website <http://www.wowtelugu.com/Communities/kamma/index.asp> - Accessed 15 February 2012

¹³ ‘Kamma’ undated, <http://www.wowtelugu.com/Communities/kamma/index.asp> - Accessed 15 February 2012

¹⁴ Srinivasulu, K. 2002, ‘Caste, Class and Social Articulation in Andhra Pradesh: Mapping Differential Regional Trajectories’, Working Paper 179, Overseas Development Institute (London) website, September <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/2692.pdf> – Accessed 13 February 2012

¹⁵ <http://www.associatepublisher.com/e/r/re/reddy.htm> - Accessed 15 February 2012

¹⁶ Kumar, A. 2007, ‘Why Telangana? Why now?’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 3 March, <http://www.isec.ac.in/Why%20Telangana.%20Why%20Now.pdf> - Accessed 15 February 2012

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<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/jaganmohan-reddy-telangana-fast/1/168125.html> – Accessed 15 February 2012.
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<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/TDP-to-launch-membership-drive/articleshow/11455303.cms?prtpage=1> – Accessed 13 February 2012.
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<http://www.isec.ac.in/Why%20Telangana,%20Why%20Now.pdf>
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